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Trend unemployment rate at 5.2%

Australia's trend unemployment rate decreased by less than 0.1 percentage points to 5.2 per cent in November 2019, according to the latest information released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) today.

ABS Chief Economist Bruce Hockman said: "In November 2019, the trend unemployment rate decreased slightly to 5.2 per cent, the same level it was six months ago."

"Over the past six months, the trend unemployment rate, participation rate and employment to population ratio have all remained relatively stable," said Mr Hockman.

Employment and hours

In November 2019, trend monthly employment increased by around 17,000 people. Full-time employment increased by around 8,000 people and part-time employment increased by around 9,000 people.

Over the past year, trend employment increased by around 269,000 people (2.1 per cent), which continued to be above the average annual growth over the past 20 years (2.0 per cent). Full-time employment increased at the same rate as the past 20 years (1.6 per cent), and part-time employment (3.2 per cent) was above the average annual growth over the past 20 years (3.0 per cent).

The trend monthly hours worked increased by 0.1 per cent in November 2019 and by 1.6 per cent over the past year. This was slightly below the 20 year average annual growth of 1.7 per cent.

Underemployment and underutilisation

The trend monthly underemployment rate remained steady at 8.4 per cent in November 2019, an increase of 0.1 percentage points over the past year. The trend monthly underutilisation rate also remained steady at 13.6 per cent in November 2019, an increase of 0.3 percentage points over the past year.

States and territories trend unemployment rate

The monthly trend unemployment rate remained steady in Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory in November 2019. The unemployment rate increased in New South Wales, Western Australia and the Northern Territory, and decreased in Tasmania.

Over the year, unemployment rates fell in Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory. The unemployment rate increased in all other states and the Northern Territory, except Tasmania where the rate was the same as it was 12 months ago.

Seasonally adjusted data

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased by 0.1 percentage points to 5.2 per cent in November 2019, while the underemployment rate decreased by 0.2 percentage points to 8.3 per cent. The seasonally adjusted participation rate remained steady at 66.0 per cent, and the number of people employed increased by around 40,000.

The net movement of employed in both trend and seasonally adjusted terms is underpinned by around 300,000 people entering and leaving employment in the month.

More details are in the November 2019 issue of Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0). In addition, further information, including regional labour market information, can be found in the upcoming November 2019 issue of Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001), due for release on 23 December. Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003), which includes employment by occupation and industry, is also due for release on 23 December 2019.

These publications are available for free download (after release) from the ABS website: https://www.abs.gov.au.

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- For media requests and interviews, contact the ABS Media Team on 1300 175 070 or media@abs.gov.au (8.30am - 5pm Monday - Friday AEDT).
- The ABS produces trend estimates to provide a more reliable indicator of the underlying behaviour of the Labour Force series. Trend estimates were introduced into the Labour Force series in the mid 1980s and are available back to February 1978. Trend estimates are considered the best indicators of the underlying behaviour in the labour market. See paragraphs 29 to 38 of the Explanatory Notes in Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0).
- Labour Force Survey data is complemented by other ABS measures to build a comprehensive picture of the labour market.
- Jobs in Australia (cat. no. 6160.0) data provides insights into all jobs held throughout the year.
- Labour Accounts (cat. no. 6150.0.55.003) data provides the number of filled jobs at a point-in-time each quarter, while Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) data measures the number of people employed each month.
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